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Includes essays by
Jen Marlowe (*Darfur Diaries*), **Anna Baltzer**
(*Witness in Palestine*), **Starhawk** & **Hedy Epstein**

Shifting Sands: *Jewish Women Confront The Israeli Occupation*



Internet Buzz Builds Around Unprecedented Collection Of Jewish Women's Stories Opposing Israeli Occupation

Bellevue, Washington, January 28, 2010 – Momentum is building as *Shifting Sands*—an anthology of women's personal stories about the Israeli occupation and life in Palestine—nears publication. Although several recent best-selling books have criticized Israeli policy (most notably, former President Jimmy Carter's *Peace, not Apartheid*) this is the first collection written entirely by Jewish women that presents personal essays, eyewitness accounts, and intense soul-searching as these 14 authors confront the reality of their beloved Israel as a brutal occupying force.

"Jews, and in particular Jewish women, are the natural force to be in the forefront of the efforts to end Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, lives and future," says Sam Bahour, Palestinian-American businessman and co-editor of *Homeland: Oral Histories of Palestine and Palestinians*. "[Here they present] stories of real people who are dispossessed." *Shifting Sands* will be published by up-and-coming non-profit green publisher Whole World Press in May. Pre-orders begin in mid-February via Amazon.com and the publisher's website at www.WholeWorldPress.org.

Unlike many books about the region, which read like historical texts or religious tracts, *Shifting Sands* is a collection of literary nonfiction that humanizes the results of the Israeli Occupation in a way no statistics or religious reasoning can. The book's unprecedented approach has evoked emotion and controversy, creating a "buzz" in the online peace community and inciting angry responses from some Israelis.

Several of the stories deal directly with life in today's West Bank and Gaza Strip. Activist Anna Baltzer profiles a courageous peaceful activist (whose brother was a suicide bomber) in Balata refugee camp. Filmmaker Jen Marlowe visits Gaza in the aftermath of the Hamas takeover and subsequent Israeli siege. Artist Susan Greene describes daily life for a family whose home is surrounded on all sides by Israel's "separation fence."

Other works recount the painful journey many Jews have to make toward an understanding of the occupation. Israeli-American Linda Dittmar painstakingly recreates some of the life experiences that forced her to admit her lifelong complicity in the silence surrounding Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. Sandra Butler wonders what her ancestors would make of her decision to speak against her own people. Starhawk connects the dots of how a Jewish upbringing combined with very real anti-Semitism in the world combine to blind American Jews to the reality of the occupation. Particularly poignant is a piece called, "Do Not Stand Idly By," in which Holocaust survivor Hedy Epstein describes the life journey that created an octogenarian Gaza Freedom Marcher.

"I have often wondered what the world learned as a result of the Nuremburg trials," Epstein recalls, adding: "The world is a slow learner."

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